



# COPS Fact Sheet

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

[www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)

## Secure Our Schools Initiative

"WE BELIEVE WE CAN DO A BETTER  
JOB IN EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN IN  
AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS AS SAFE AS  
POSSIBLE."

SUPERINTENDENT BUSTER EVANS  
BLECKLEY COUNTY (GEORGIA)  
SCHOOL DISTRICT

The COPS Office offers a variety of publications, products, and training opportunities to advance community policing and support its grant programs. COPS Office publications and products offer insights into the experiences of others in the field in addressing specific problems, including the following:

- ✓ *School Safety Toolkit*, which includes documents and guides to help address issues often associated with school safety and youth violence.
- ✓ *School Safety CD-ROM*
- ✓ *Traffic Congestion Around Schools POP Guide*
- ✓ *Addressing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide to Police Problem-Solvers*
- ✓ *COPS Collaboration Toolkit*
- ✓ *Implementing Responses to Problems*

The COPS Office also sponsors training opportunities and conferences to give law enforcement professionals an opportunity to learn, network, and exchange ideas with colleagues. COPS Office publications and training opportunities are posted at COPS Online, [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

### Secure Our Schools

America's children spend more time in school than almost any other place outside the home. That places a huge responsibility on American schools and those charged with keeping them safe. In a time when a variety of weapons traffic illegally among America's youth, maintaining school safety becomes an increasingly difficult task. Classrooms no longer depend solely on teachers, but on teams of administrators, health care workers, security staff, and law enforcement professionals. Keeping America's children safe has become one of this nation's most successful collaborations, and it is a shining example of effective community policing.

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (the COPS Office) has long demonstrated a commitment to school safety. The COPS Office has invested more than \$850 million in America's schools through programs like COPS in Schools, School-Based Partnerships, and the Safe Schools Initiative. The COPS Office expanded that range of programs in fiscal year 2002 to include Secure Our Schools (SOS). In FY08, SOS distributed nearly \$15 million to help schools in jurisdictions with high-risk areas respond to growing safety concerns. Grantees are required to contribute a local match of 50 percent toward the total cost of the approved grant project.

### Background

SOS gives grantees the opportunity to establish and enhance a variety of school safety equipment and/or programs to continue to improve school safety efforts within their communities. SOS grants help cover the cost of security measures such as the placement and use of metal detectors, locks, lighting, and other deterrent measures; security assessments; security training for students and personnel; coordination with local law enforcement; and other measures that could increase the school's security significantly. The COPS Office works with grantees to ensure that these funds address the most pressing security needs of our young people while they are in school. SOS addresses a variety of existing and emerging problems relating to school security through responses that range from traditional to innovative and rely on both new technology and the experience of school administrators and law enforcement professionals. Law enforcement officers are encouraged to consult with school violence researchers, child psychologists, principals, and other school personnel to develop community policing programs to prevent school violence. These programs should be tailored specifically to improve each school's safety efforts.

### Contact the COPS Office

For more information about COPS Office school safety programs and resources, call the COPS Office Response Center at 800.421.6770, or visit COPS Online at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).